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heaven the next Saturday after I die,' says she, 'and what need I want of anything else?' says she. And old Peggy Donohue says, 'sure its confession,' says she, 'for when the priest says the Latin over me won't I be as clean of sin as the child unborn,' says she, 'and what more do I want than that,' says she, 'and what are yees all here for with your shillings, if that's not the thing?' says she. And then old Nancy Smith just riz on them all, 'and sure,' says she, 'it's astray yees are entirely; sure isn't one drop of the holy oil worth them all?' says she, 'if I get one drop of that on me before the breath is out of me, what need I care for anything else?' says she. And now do you see, Jem, what none of them thought of to trust in?"

"Aye do I," said Jem. "Sure none of them knows that it's in their own Bible that *the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin*. And isn't it the poor thing that none of them thinks of trusting in that, the creatures? and isn't it the quare thing, if the're all Catholics, that they don't all trust in *the same thing*, but one taking one thing and another another thing? but sure that's the way with them. But, Pat, now did you tell them of the blood of Christ, and you at a station?"

"Well, deed then I did, Jem," says Pat. "Says I, girls, isn't the blood of Christ the best thing at all, for sure that cleanses from all sin?"

"And how did they take that at all, Pat?" said Jem.

"Well, Jem," said Pat, "they just darned their eyes in me, as if they never heard the like of that before; but I hadn't time to hear more of it, for Pat Daly was just coming out of the room where Father John was hearing confessions, and he just got hearing what I said, so he turned round on me, and, 'Is it a Souper you are, to bring the like of that to a station with you?' says he. 'Not a bit of it,' says I; 'I takes no soup, thank God,' says I. And that's true, anyway, for not a drop of soup crossed my carcase since the Relief Committee gave it out in the famine. And I just turned round again on him, and, says I—"Are you going to tell us that the Soupers will have the blood of Christ all to themselves, and the Catholics get none of it?" says I; and with that he just quit it. Well, who do you think I seen go in next, Jem?"

"I don't know, Pat," said Jem.

"Well, if it wasn't Tim Tevlin," said Pat.

"Is it him," said Jem, "the poacher and sheep stealer, that never did an honest day's work in his life, and a Ribbon-man into the bargain? What does the likes of him want of absolution?"

"Well, now," said Pat, "if Father John can wipe out a man's sins with a turn of his hand, isn't that just the man for him to try on?"

"Well, sure enough," said Jem; "but did he get absolution?"

"Well, I'll tell you about that," said Pat, "for the door stood open a minute, and I just seen it. There was the wee table, you know, with the plate on to drop the shilling in, just foreinnt the door, and Tim was giving it the go by. 'Where's the shilling?' says Father John. 'Havn't got it, your reverence,' says Tim. 'Go off with you and get it,' says Father John. 'And where will I get it, your reverence?' says Tim. 'What's that to me?' says Father John: 'off with you and get it.' And so Tim stood there quite easy. 'What are you waiting for there?' says Father John. 'Won't your reverence give me absolution?' says Tim. 'You'll get none without the shilling; be off out of that for it,' says Father John. So Tim stood there as easy as you please. 'What are you standing there for?' says Father John. 'Will I steal it, your reverence?' says Tim. 'Be off for the shilling, and don't bother me,' says Father John, with a screech. Well, Tim see'n Father John was minding nothing, he was that mad, and Tim had got just foreinnt the table, and as he was turning round, he just drops his hand in the plate, and lifts the shilling, and walks out, and away out of the house. And, a while after, in comes Tim; and, when the next man comes out, in goes Tim. 'And have you the shilling, now?' says Father John. 'Yes, your reverence,' says Tim, dropping the shilling in the plate; 'but sure I had to steal it, your reverence,' says he. Well, you never seen a man so deaf as Father John. He never heard a word, but just says—"Down on your knees," says he. And then the door shut to, and I seen no more till Tim comes out, looking as pleased as if he had stole the best sheep in a flock."

"Well, now, I wonder," said Jem, "would the absolution do for stealing the shilling?"

"And why wouldn't it?" said Pat, "did'nt he confess it, and get absolution?"

"Well, maybe it was as good for that as for all the rest," said Jem, "but did you go in yourself, Pat?"

"No, indeed, then, I didn't," said Pat, "but I was mighty feard Father John would have caught me, and lugged me in, maybe; for, a while after, out comes Father John in a hurry, and, 'Boys,' says he, 'is that Pat Doyle going down the street?' 'It is, your reverence,' says severals. 'Out with you, boys, and fetch him in to me,' says Father John. So off the boys went. Well, you know, Jem, Pat Doyle is taken up with the readers, and has quit the Mass altogether, and goes to Church; so, in he comes with the boys; and deed it's the dark corner I got into then; and then Father John says to Pat Doyle, 'Are you come to confession?' says he. 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle, 'I confessed my sins to God this

morning.' 'Much good that'll do you,' says Father John; 'what were you promised for turning?' says he. So Pat Doyle didn't say a word. 'Was it money?' says Father John; 'was it five pounds?' 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. 'Was it meal?' says Father John. 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. 'Was it soup?' says Father John. 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. 'Salvation, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. Well, Father John looked done for a minute, anyway; and then, says he, 'Are you coming back to Mass?' says he. 'No, your reverence,' says Pat Doyle. 'And what will you and your children live on if you don't, when you were promised nothing?' says Father John. 'Please your reverence,' says Pat Doyle, 'we'll live on the blossoms of the bushes afore we go back.' Well, if I wasn't thinking what would come on Pat Doyle, or myself too, if I was caught, when who should come in but the Rev. Mr. Owens himself; for he was coming up the street, and he seen Pat Doyle fetched in to the station, and just followed him in, and he just comes right up to Father John, and says to him, 'Sir, it was I that took this man, Pat Doyle, away from your Mass, for I showed him that the sacrifice of Christ was finished on the cross, never more to be repeated; and that no Christian man should bow down in worship to a wafer. And I am ready now, sir, to show you, before the people, why no Christian man should do so, if you will undertake to show them why they should.' 'Pat Devine, where's Pat Devine?' says Father John. 'Here, sir,' says Pat. 'Is it getting my horse you are? Will he never be ready?' says Father John. 'Yes, sir, coming, sir,' says Pat Devine, and out he comes with the horse in a hurry. 'Oh, your reverence,' says Peggy Donoghue; 'sure you won't go without hearing my confession.' 'Oh! your reverence,' says Sal Gougerdy, and all of them, 'won't you stop a bit for us?' 'Out of the way, women,' says Father John; 'is it all day I'll be kept here?' And up he gets on his horse, with Pat Devine holding the bridle and the stirrup, and flattering him all he could, and I peeping out of the open window: and I seen, as he rode off, that Pat Devine just turned the wrong side of his hand after him; and says he, 'The back of my hand to you, that would'nt stand up for your Church and your religion!'"

"Well, Pat," said Jem, "sure Paddy Doyle puts us all to shame, that wasn't afraid to stand up like a man."

"Well, maybe so," said Pat; "but sure why can't a man keep it all to himself, when it sets the country against him? Sure I trust in nothing but Christ and His blood, that cleanseth from all sin: but why would I go to say that out, and bring trouble on myself?"

Who knows but the time is coming, when Pat himself will say it before men? Pat does not know it, nor mean it now. But the time comes to every one that truly trusts in Christ, when something in their breasts within will make them confess Christ before men; for otherwise Christ would have to deny them before His Father in heaven.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, SEPTEMBER, 1853.

THERE are but two ways of ruling the world. The one, that of reducing men to passive obedience, by practising on their fears of evil, and making them slaves; the other, by winning the affections and satisfying the convictions of rational free agents, and thus securing their voluntary obedience to well-ordered rule. These systems may be briefly called slavery and freedom. The

one seeks to keep men narrow-minded, grovelling, ignorant, and superstitious; the other, to make them intellectual, spiritual, wise, and happy.

To which system does true Christianity belong? If to the former, she would do wisely, no doubt, to shut up the portals of knowledge, and to limit the field of vision, lest men, having once enjoyed a glimpse of the glorious canopy of heaven, should struggle to emancipate themselves from that tyranny which would doom them to grope in darkness and ignorance for ever, rather than peril its own selfish sway over their minds and liberties.

If, however, Christianity be a system whose power consists in its suitableness to enlighten, to elevate, to purify our race, and exacts nothing more than the voluntary obedience of reasoning free agents, the defensive armour of a shrinking or timid policy does not suit her. Let the priests of another faith ply their prudential expedients to keep the world from enlarging its knowledge, lest to the same extent they should diminish their own power. True Christianity stands in a higher and firmer attitude. She has, thanks be to God, come down to us with all the majesty of truth, and with all the grandeur of age, unscathed by the pigmy philosophy which would, by undermining man's faith in an unseen world, reduce him to the level of the beasts that perish. The solemn march of eighteen centuries has but demonstrated more clearly that religious truth is seated on a rocky pinnacle, whose summit may, indeed, have sometimes been obscured by the clouds of error or doubt, but which has survived, and will still survive the storms of time, and remain unaltered through eternity. With such a religion as this there is nothing to hide. A half-learned and superficial public may associate with the very notion of a priesthood, the blindness and bigotry of a sinking cause, but they must be taught that Christianity is not a bigoted or a sinking cause, and that those who are able to estimate its grand simplicity, are fearless of the most thorough sifting of its pretensions, and neither require mankind slavishly to take it for granted, nor are disposed to shun a single question that can be started on the subject of Christian evidences. Again, we say, with such a religion as this there is nothing to hide. All should be above board. The broadest light of day should be made fully and freely to circulate throughout all her mysteries. Secrets she has

none. Her office has been to reveal mysteries—to bring life and immortality to light—to make known what was before kept secret from the foundation of the world. With the frankness and simplicity of conscious greatness, she invites free inquiry, and challenges scrutiny; and whether she has to contend with the pride of philosophy, falsely so called, or to oppose herself to the prejudices of the unenlightened multitude, she is not afraid to do so on her own strength, and spurns the props and auxiliaries of superstition, of which the votaries of a weaker or doubtful faith are so anxious to take advantage. Essentially a religion of light, she is ever ready to come to the light, that her deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

We have been led into these considerations by reflecting on what appears to us to have been the cause and the probable consequences of the late modification of the system of National Education in this country, to which we have made allusion in another part of our paper—we mean the exclusion of the work on the *Evidences of Christianity*, which (after a twenty years' approbation) has at length been effected by the influence of those who would rather trust to the system of implicit faith in authority, aided by the props and aids of superstition, than attempt, by teaching mankind to think and reason rightly, to place their faith on the more solid basis of reason and knowledge. We have, perhaps, been

* See St. Matthew's Gospel, x. 33; and St. Mark, viii, 38.

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